

## News snaps

### Token hunger strike in Rangpur

RANGPUR, Feb 8: The consumers of electricity and telephone staged a token hunger strike in the town Wednesday protesting against corruption and malpractice in the two departments, reports UNB.

The strike, organised by the Electricity and Telephone Consumers' Association to press home their seven-point charter of demand, began at 9 in the morning at Kachari Bazar in the town. The demands include stopping of load-shedding, exemption of interest of electric bills, adequate supply of LP gas, conversion of telephone exchange from analog to digital one, and take action against the corrupt employees of the exchanges and electric supply office.

### Need for people-admin contact suggested

NABIGANJ (Habiganj), Feb 8: Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria recently said the main objective of the government is to expedite the development of the country and to ensure people's welfare, reports BSS.

He said the present government has been able to resolve the long-standing problems of the Ganges water sharing and insurgency in Chittagong Hill Tracts with a view to creating peaceful atmosphere for successful implementation of development activities. Addressing a meeting at Gajnaipur union under Nabiganj thana here as the chief guest, finance minister stressed the need for close contact between the people and the administration for resolving the local problems.

### Agri-loan recovery rate miserable

PATUAKHALI, Feb 8: The district Agriculture Credit Committee at a meeting has expressed dissatisfaction over the disbursement of loan during the first six months of the current fiscal, reports UNB.

Officials said nationalised commercial banks (NCBs) and Bangladesh Krishi Bank disbursed Tk 3.61 crore against their target of Tk 9.83 crore during the period. Deputy Commissioner M Habbibullah, also the chairman of the committee, presided over the meeting. Addressing the meeting the DC described the loan recovery rate of the banks as miserable and advised the bank management to maintain a close contact with certificate offices for quick disposal of certificate cases. Among others, General Certificate Officer, TNOs, local representatives from NCBs, Bangladesh Krishi Bank, Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation, District Fishery Department and Swarnibhar Bangladesh attended the meeting.

### Children given polio vaccine

CHUADANGA, Feb 8: A total of 1,55,000 children up to five years of age of the four thanas and three pourasavas of the district were given polio vaccine and vitamin-A capsules during the 2nd round of the 4th national immunisation programme observed here last month, reports BSS.

Local health department in cooperation with the local EPI officials implemented the programme.

### Madaripur Bar Council election

MADARIPUR, Feb 8: The election of Madaripur Bar Council was held at the bar council auditorium recently, reports BSS.

The newly-elected office-bearers are: President — Mujibur Rahman Khan (uncontested), Vice-Presidents — Chittoranj Mandal and Syedur Rahman, Secretary — Sujit Chatterji, Joint Secretaries — Jafar Ali Mia, S M Ruhul Amin and Moslim Ali, Treasurer — Gopal Krisno Mandal.

### Samata distributes warm clothes

PABNA, Feb 8: A non-government organisation (NGO) has undertaken a laudable drive to distribute winter clothes worth Tk 35 lakh among the cold-hit poor and destitute people of the district, reports UNB.

The organisation, named Samata, has already distributed warm clothes worth amounting to Tk 10 lakh which included blanket, saree, lungi, jacket, sweater, muffler and wrapper. Rest of the clothes would be distributed among the 50,000 people of Santhia, Bera, Sujanager, Chatmohar, Bhangura and Faridpur thanas of Pabna and Sahjadpur thana of Sirajganj district.

### Burglary at Joypurhat

JOYPURHAT Feb 8: A burglary was committed at a jewellery shop in the town in which the culprits decamped with gold ornaments and cash, police said, reports UNB.

The burglars broke the door open and entered into Naz Jewellers on Shahed Ramkumar Sarani on the night of January 29 and went away with 10 tolas of gold ornament and Tk 72,000 cash. A case was lodged with the local police. In another incident, police arrested one cow-lifter and seized four cows from village Banshkhata in Sadar thana of the district on Sunday. The arrested was identified as Duddullah Hossain. A case was registered with the police.

### 2 road accidents claim 2 lives

COMILLA, Feb 8: Two persons were killed on the spot in two separate road accidents here on Friday, reports BSS.

Mariam Begum, 25, was killed on the spot when a Dhaka-bound Sonapur-Dhaka passenger bus collided with a Chittagong-bound BRIC bus at Jagarjuri under Kotwali thana on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway here. Six others received injuries and were admitted to Comilla Medical Hospital. In another incident, an unidentified private car driver died in a crash with a Dhaka-bound truck at Jinglatoli under Daudkandi thana here this noon. Police seized both the truck and private car. The truck driver was at large.

### Workshop for jobless youths

JHALAKATHI, Feb 8: A month-long workshop for the educated unemployed youths with a view to creating self-employment opportunity was inaugurated here on Thursday, reports UNB.

Some 100 youths from Jhalakathi, Barguna and Pirojpur districts are participating the workshop, organised by Bangladesh Youth Development Directorate. Official sources said, after providing training the directorate will disburse loan among the participants to make them self-reliant.

### Man stabbed to death

From Our Correspondent

BRAHMANBARIA, Feb 8: Elder brother Abdus Salam was stabbed to death by his younger brother Ful Mia at village Chatura Sarif under Akhaura thana of the district on December 18.

According to reliable sources, one Ful Mia stabbed his wife Chan Bannu indiscriminately at one stage of altercation between them. Their daughter Amina Khatun, 9, was also stabbed. Hearing hue and cry of the victims mother and daughter Ful Mia's elder brother Abdus Salam rushed to the spot from the other house and tried to stop his younger brother Ful Mia. Consequently Ful Mia became furious and stabbed his elder brother. Abdus Salam died on the spot.

### Woman burnt to death

From Our Correspondent

GOPALGANJ, Feb 8: One Zuthika Rani Biswas, 35, wife of Sreedham Chandra Biswas died by fire burn at Kasiani thana sadar of Gopalganj district recently. Zuthika Rani Biswas, wife of Sreedham Chandra Biswas of Kasiani thana sadar went to her kitchen warming by fire in an oven. Then she was burnt. As a result, Zuthika Rani Biswas died on the spot. An unnatural death (UD) case has been registered with Kasiani police station in this connection.

### Winter clothes distributed

From Our Correspondent

CHANDPUR: Amar Gram, a local non-government organisation has distributed a large number of winter clothes in Matlab, Chandpur, recently. Poor people and slum dwellers received the winter clothes, includes blankets, sweaters, mufflers, jackets and wrappers.

A large number of women, children and aged people gathered to take winter clothes and protect them from the shivering cold that hit the country. Nasrudin Sarker, Enayet Karim, Chairman and Secretary respectively of the organisation and newly elected local chairman attended the function.

### Production of juice from date decreasing

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Feb 8: The extraction of juice from date-trees in Kushtia is decreasing day by day. This district was once famous for it.

With the advent of winter hundreds of date-juice extractors locally known as "gachhi" went out on their traditional round with sharp "dao" and earthen jars for the extraction of juice. It is regrettable that no attention is being paid now. The great threat to this indigenous industry comes from the brick furnaces whose owners use thousands of date-trees as fuel. Poverty has hit the tree owners and they are often compelled to sell the trees to brick manufacturers at a nominal price. In the face of bottlenecks the traditional indigenous industry needs financial support and protection for survival.



Prof Hosne Ara Begum, Executive Director, TMSS (sitting 5th from L) and M Mosharraf Hossain, Managing Director, Rapport, (sitting 4th from R) with the participants of a management & TOT training course conducted recently at Bogra by Rapport Bangladesh Limited.

## Physicians asked to discharge duties honestly

NAOGAON, Feb 8: Health and Family Welfare Minister Salahuddin Yusuf called upon the physicians, officials and employees concerned to discharge their duties honestly to render better medicare services to the distressed people, reports UNB.

The minister was addressing a reception accorded to him at the premises of 100-bed hospital here on Friday. The minister said the government has taken up proper steps with a view to ensuring medicare facilities for all by the year 2000 side by side modernization of the health services. He said, the government ap-

pointed some 1024 physicians throughout the country to reach the health services to the door steps of the people.

The government had signed the long cherished Ganges Water Sharing Treaty within five months after taking over power and also signed the Hill Tracts Peace Treaty terminating unrest, enmity, terrorism and clash of long 20 years," said Salahuddin, referring to various successful activities of the present government during last 19 months.

He also said the objective of the present government was to establish permanent peace and

stability in the country, adding that we are the friends of people not masters.

Presided over by district Civil Surgeon M Abdullah Hashmi the function was also addressed, among others, by local Awami League leader M Abdul Jalil, Alhaj Shamsuddin Ahmed MP, Shaheen Monwara Huq MP and Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Ali.

Earlier, the minister visited different wards of the hospital and inquired about the patients. He assured about the extension and modernisation of the hospital and to upgrade it into a 200-bed one.

## Large scale slaughtering of cattle raises concern

PABNA, Feb 8: Nearly 30 lakh cattle of the country lose their lives every year due to large scale slaughtering and acute paucity of fodder, affecting agriculture and dairy farming, reports UNB.

Officials attributed the fodder scarcity to gradual loss of grazing fields and turning the fodder like different kinds of pulse into "human foods".

A survey showed that about 2.75 crore cattle are provided 3.5 crore tons of fodder every year against their requirement for 13 crore tons. As a result, 80

per cent cattle suffer from malnutrition.

A large number of cattle fall prey to various diseases every year, but adequate medicines are hardly provided from local livestock departments or veterinary centres.

According to an estimate, only Tk 30 is allotted for the treatment of a cattle every year. And the money is spent only in those areas where veterinary doctors and livestock officers are active.

Most of the thana headquar-

ters have no veterinary doctor and livestock officer. Some 400 posts of Livestock Officers and Assistant Veterinary doctors throughout the country are lying vacant for long.

Apart from this, under-aged cattle are being slaughtered rampantly across the country, defying a government ban in this regard.

As per the law, slaughtering of cow under 10, bullocks under seven years old and goats and sheep under three is strictly prohibited.



CHAPAINAWABGANJ: A procession in the town on the occasion of World Leprosy Day on January 25.

## Wheat production falls short of target in S-W dists

From Our Correspondent

MAGURA, Feb 8: The production target of wheat cultivation has not been achieved in 10 south western districts during the current Rabi crops cultivation season.

These 10 districts are Magura, Jhenidah, Narail, Jessore, Khulna, Bagerhat, Satkhira, Kustia, Chuadanga, and Meherpur.

According to Agriculture Extension Department (AED), they took up a target for cultivating wheat on about 1,8800 hectares of land in those 10 districts. But about 86,736 hectares of land were brought under wheat cultivation during the current season.

A group of farmers said, the target of wheat cultivation has not been fulfilled in their areas due to late harvest of Aman paddy.

On the other hand, a section of farmers in Shalikhah thana area did not cultivate wheat in their land for the hope of cultivating Boro-IRRI paddy. It was reported from the AED source, the target of wheat cultivation in Magura district was 9 thousand hectares of land. About 6,735 hectares of land were brought under wheat cultivation in four thanas of the district. In Jhenidah district the

target of wheat cultivation was 14 thousand hectares of land. About 11,615 hectares of land were brought under wheat cultivation. 16 thousand hectares of land were targeted in Jessore district. About 9,684 hectares of land were brought under wheat cultivation in Jessore district. In Narail district 4,500 hectares of land were targeted under wheat cultivation. About 3217 hectares of land were brought under wheat cultivation. About three hundred hectares of land were targeted of wheat cultivation in Khulna district. About 135 hectares of land were brought under wheat cultivation in this district. In Bagerhat district, the target of wheat cultivation was five hundred hectares of land. About 221 hectares of land were brought under wheat cultivation in this district. In Gopalganj district, the target of wheat cultivation was 24 thousand hectares of land. But about 18317 hectares of land were brought under wheat cultivation in this district.

In Chuadanga district, 23 thousand hectares of land were targeted for wheat cultivation. But about 21,150 hectares of land have been cultivated. The target of wheat cultivation in Satkhira district

was 1500 hectares of land but about 1757 hectares of land were brought under wheat cultivation. In this district target of wheat cultivation has been fulfilled. Even above 17 per cent above of the target were cultivated here. In Meherpur district, the target of wheat cultivation was 16 thousand hectares of land. But about 13905 hectares of land were brought under wheat cultivation during the current season.

About one lakh three thousand hectares of land were brought under wheat cultivation last year due to favourable weather.

The wheat growers got bumper production of wheat last year. About two lakh fifty thousand metric tons of wheat were produced during the last season.

While talking to the marginal and landless farmers of the Magura and adjoining areas they said, they had to cultivate wheat without irrigation water due to lack of facilities.

They also had to depend on the mercy of nature. During the current season a severe cold persisted and huge fog also hampered good production of wheat.

## In name of Ansar service

# Tk 200 cr excess fare collected by bus owners

PABNA, Feb 8: Bus owners in the northern and southern regions of the country collected over Taka 200 crore excess fare during last 10 years in the name of Ansar service in the night

## Rapport training course held

A week-long training on 'Management and Training of Trainers' was organised by Rapport Bangladesh Limited for 41 executives and managers of Thengamara Mohila Sabuj Sangha (TMSS), a local NGO, recently at TMSS's training centre at Gokul, Bogra. M Mosharraf Hossain, Managing Director, Rapport, conducted the course, missing for 17 days.

The programme was inaugurated by Prof Hosne Ara Begum, Executive Director, TMSS. The inaugural was also addressed by Asia Akkas Rani, Executive Committee Member, TMSS.

The topics of the programme included basics of management, communication, motivation, leadership, training methodologies and spoken English. The sessions on spoken English was conducted by Rapport's trainer Shihab Uddin Ahmed.

## Headmaster missing for 17 days

By Staff Correspondent

A headmaster of a school of Kathalia thana in Jhalokathi has been missing for 17 days since January 21 last.

Bhuban Hawlader, headmaster of East Chetlari Government Primary School, did not return home after he left Kathalia Thana Education Office for his residence at about 10 am one of the former students of the teacher who visited the area on Thursday said on Friday night. Bhuban Hawlader was allegedly abducted following a dispute over land, the student said adding besides a few days ago he had a feud with some members of the school committee.

However, Kathalia thana could not be contacted on Friday night. Father-in-law of Bhuban Hawlader lodged a GD with Kathalia thana in connection with the incident.

## OMS of rice starts in Barisal div

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Feb 8: The Open Market Sale (OMS) of rice has already been started from 30 centres in six southern districts of Barisal, Pirojpur and Jhalakati under Barisal division. Of these centres, 16 were opened in Bhola.

According to the decision of the Ministry of Food, 5 centres were launched in Barisal divisional headquarter while two centres each in other districts except Bhola.

According to food department, there is no decision of OMS centre in thana level, but centres were opened at thana level in Bhola exceptionally.

Rice was being sold at Tk 14 per kg at the lowest through OMS centres. But in markets rice is being sold at Tk 16 per kg in different places of Barisal and Tk 18 at Kalapara under Patuakhali district, local people informed.

OMS of rice has been introduced with a view to keeping price of rice more or less stable in the normal market.

## Woman killed in Comilla road accident

COMILLA, Feb 8: A woman was killed and 50 others were injured, 16 seriously, in two road accidents at Jangjuli in Sadar thana on Dhaka-Chittagong highway on Friday, reports UNB.

The dead was identified as Morium, 25, wife of Shafiq Miah of Tonki village under Muradnagar thana of the district.

Police said a microbus first met an accident at the spot when a bus hit it, injuring three people.

Soon after the mishap, another Chittagong-bound bus from Companiganj fell into a roadside ditch as the driver tried to avoid hitting the microbus.

The woman died on the spot while 47 were injured in the accident.

Eight injured people were admitted to Comilla Medical College Hospital and the rest to general hospital.

## 2 killed in Natore road mishap

NATORE, Feb 8: Two young men were killed on the spot in a road accident at Teberhat area on Natore-by-pass road, police said on Saturday, reports UNB.

The victims were identified as Shabuj, 25, and Rana, 23 of the Station Baroghachha of the town.

Witnesses and police sources said, the accident occurred on Feb 1 when a Rajshahi-bound goods laden truck ran over the motor cycle of the victims. The driver along with the truck managed to flee the scene.

A case was lodged with the police.

coaches, reports UNB. The night coach service introduced in 1987 for smooth and full time road communication between Dhaka and all important places including the district headquarters of the country.

From the beginning, the bus owners appointed two Ansars in each bus to ensure safe journey and started collecting additional Tk 10 per ticket from the passengers to maintain the Ansars.

After one year, the Ansars were withdrawn from the bus but still they are realising the additional Tk 10 from the passengers. A content source said so far, the bus owners realised over Tk 200 crore additional fare.

Almost everyday untoward situation is being occurred in

the ticket counters due to the realisation of additional fare. The concerned officials are not taking measures to stop this due to mysterious reasons.

Meanwhile, after the withdrawal of Ansars from the buses the incidents of dacoity have increased alarmingly on the roads of 16 northern and 12 southern routes, passengers said.

Joint secretary of the executive committee of Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Samik Federation Tipu Biswas told that additional fare collection was illegal and inhuman. He demanded immediate stoppage of collection such fare.

The passengers urged authority concerned to look into matter and take appropriate measures to stop the collection of additional fare.

## Pabna Newsletter

From Our Correspondent

### Cow electrocuted

PABNA, Feb 8: A cow was electrocuted near Pabna District Judges court on January 28. The cow suddenly touched a road-side electric pole when moving through DC road and died.

Owner of the cow Abdul Baten of Katcharipara, Pabna town informed the local PDB authorities, who at once disconnected the pole from electric supply line and then repaired the same.

### Dacoity committed

A dacoity was committed in the house of one Edward D'Costa a Christian leader, in village Uthesh under Mathurapur union within Chatmohar thana of Pabna district on January 25.

The gang of armed dacoits, numbering 10 to 15, falsely identifying them as policemen entered into the house and took away cash money and gold ornaments worth about Taka 50,000.

While living the house, the dacoits made blank-fires and blasted bombs and cocktails for making people panicky.

Chatmohar thana refused to receive the case at first, but later, at the intervention of the Chairman of the union Parishad Syed Ali Mollah, police received the case, but arrested none as yet.

### 1 killed, 5 hurt by dacoits

One person was killed and five others injured at village Charpara under Santhia thana of Pabna district on Wednesday last when a gang of around dacoits opened fire when obstructed by villagers. The dacoits were fleeing from a house in the village after committing dacoity at dead of night.

Nearly 8/10 armed dacoits forced their entry into the house of one Mokaddes Ali. When they were fleeing with the booties, the villagers rushed and tried to resist them. The dacoits opened fire for saving themselves. The house-owner received gun-shot injuries and was taken immediately to Santhia thana Health Complex. There he died later on villager Ayub Ali received gun-shot injuries. He was shifted to the same hospital where he was still receiving treatment. The dacoits, however, managed to escape.

### Bid to rape woman: 1 caught

One Abdul Ali, 21, son of one Nabiruddin of village Rajau Mandal was caught red handed by villagers while he was allegedly attempting to rape one Nazeran Nessa, 20, daughter of one Abu Kader. The miscreants were punished by the villagers themselves without handing him over to Police.

The poor girl, married but

abandoned by her husband, was going to her place of work in village Rampur but on way, miscreant Abdul Ali caught her, took her near village gorasthan. The helpless poor girl cried out and on hearing her cries, villagers rushed to the spot, caught him red handed.

### Peon stabbed by accountant

Mohammad Sarwar Hossain, a peon serving in the Pabna District BRDB office was allegedly stabbed by the accountant of same office on January 25 when the peon demanded his salary lying due with the office for 3 months. The peon, with profuse bleeding was immediately shifted to Pabna General Hospital.

The incident has generated tension among all employees of the office.

The peon, it is learnt, despite his sincere services was not getting his salary for three months since November, 1997. He demanded his due salary on the eve of the Eid-ul-Fitr. They exchanged of hot words.

The accountant at one stage stabbed the peon.

### FP employee dead

A peon serving in Family Planning office of Santhia thana in Pabna district died suddenly while passing through the Jubilee tank of Pabna town on January 26. He lost senses, but failed to regain his senses.

He was shifted to Pabna General Hospital and after his admission, he died.

The unfortunate peon named Jaiul Abedin came from Santhia to the district office of Pabna for getting two bills from the Santhia Thana Family Planning Office passed on the eve of the Holy Eid-ul-Fitr.

Members of the staff of Pabna District Family Planning office rushed to the hospital to pay last homage to their colleagues. They also jointly contributed an amount of Tk 1700 to the members of the family of the deceased.

### 2 arrested with revolvers

Two young men were arrested by Pabna police after conducting a sudden raid in the Banglabazar mahalla of Pabna Pourashabha on January 25 when one country-made revolver was arrested from their possession.

According to Police, the two arrested persons are: Deben, 32, and Momin, 33. Deben is the son Mokendra of Jugipara of Radhanagar which Momin is the son of one Fazul Haque of Ghospara both of Pabna town. Police also informed that several cases were also pending against both the boys.

## Tk 9 cr Gaibandha town protection plan

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, Feb 8: Water Development Board (WDB) has undertaken Gaibandha town protection plan just to arrest flood water and erosion of the river Ghagot during this current fiscal year.

The authorities have allocated a fund of Taka nine crore 90 lakh for implementation of the plan. Earlier, a fund of Taka on crore 15 lakh was allocated for this fiscal year. It will be just to start the implementation work. During this fiscal year five more crore taka will be allotted in this connection.

In every rainy season Gaibandha town dwellers have been suffering badly due to onrush of flood water as well as erosion. During the rainy season maximum number of dwelling houses of Gaibandha town go under knee to waist deep water which last for over two weeks. In 1988 and 1995 the flood situation exceeded all its previous records. According to WDB assessment, flood situation continued to worsen following rapid siltation of river bed. As such the localities are being inundated overflowing the bank of river. Moreover due to erosion of the river Ghagot many dwelling houses were damaged.

In 1995-96 financial year Water Development Board monitored town protection plan and

referred to the concerned ministry for approval. The ministry later allocated a fund of Taka nine crore 90 lakh.

The plan included loop cutting of river, construction of bridge, construction of high school, 10 sluice gates and embankments. The authority, meanwhile, acquired 64 hectares of land for the implementation of the plan. It will take two years to complete the plan. Following implementation of the plan Gaibandha town will be safe from onslaught of flood water and river erosion.

## Smuggled Indian medicines flood markets

### NARAIL, Feb 8: Smuggled Indian medicines including the banned ones have flooded the markets of the south-western region of the country affecting the pharmaceutical companies of the country, reports UNB.

The medicines are smuggled into the country through different border points of Satkhira, Jessore, Jhenidah, Chuadanga, Meherpur and Kushtia districts.

A source said that some unemployed young men are involved in the smuggling.